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Marshall, AJ, Wich, SA and Ancrenaz, M (2016) Fresh strategies to save orangutans. Nature, 535 (493). ISSN 0028-0836

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Fresh strategies to save orangutans

The Bornean orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus*) was this month listed as critically endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, despite decades of conservation efforts. We urgently need fresh strategies to counteract habitat loss and hunting, and to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Both species of Asia's only great ape (*P. pygmaeus* and the Sumatran orangutan, *P. abelii*) now face 'an extremely high risk of extinction'. Current approaches have done little to reduce the main threats: hunting and conversion of forest to plantations (E. Meijaard *et al. Ann. N. Y. Acad. Sci.* **1249**, 29–44; 2012).

Safeguarding protected areas and enforcing existing bans on orangutan killing are important, but such efforts are insufficient in isolation. We need to maximize the conservation value of degraded lands and use an integrated, landscape-scale approach to reconcile economic development and biodiversity conservation. And we must promote sustainable management practices that are backed by rigorous, transparent certification mechanisms and incorporate explicit economic valuation of the ecosystem services provided by orangutans and their habitats.

Crucially, success will also demand direct engagement and collaboration of conservationists with the mining, forestry and oil-palm industries.

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